

REMARKS

The Examiner had rejected all of the claims 1-3, 6-15 and 17-20 which are presently in the application based upon a combination of U.S. Patent 6, 325,717 to Kawagoe et al. in view of newly cited U.S. Patent 6,377,264 to Iizuka et al., under 35 USC 103 (a).

In connection with each of the independent claims, the Examiner recognized that Kawagoe et al. did not disclose the features relating to maintaining the direction of motion of character based upon a first fixed viewing perspective even after there was a switching to a second fixed viewing perspective, so long as the operation instruction is maintained. Also, the Examiner cited Iizuka for the further limitation in each of these claims that when ultimately the operation instruction is changed to another operation instruction, after such switching of the viewing perspective has taken place, only then is the direction of motion of the character calculated based upon the second fixed viewing perspective.

In particular, the Examiner specifically quoted and cited sections from Iizuka from columns 8, 9, and 10.

It should be specifically pointed out that in applicant's claimed invention, he clearly defined in the claim itself that the "operation instruction" is based upon input operation requests "by a user" who is operating the system. Correspondingly, in the Iizuka reference, he refers to such instructions as "input direction".

In Iizuka, he does indicate that viewing directions are being changed. He also wants to maintain the moving directions of a player character when such viewing directions are changed. However, Iizuka does that based upon completely different criteria that are actually contrary to what applicant is claiming. In Iizuka, he maintains the movement direction based upon a

determination of whether the character “stays within a specific area”. This is clearly recited throughout this section of Iizuka. Particularly, in column 8, lines 53-56, where he states the specific direction is maintained “when the player character stays within a specific area”. This is again repeated in column 9, lines 2 and 3, column 9, lines 7-8; column 9, lines 66-68; column 10, lines 3-6 and essentially in the portion quoted by the Examiner himself, namely column 10, lines 29-35.

Accordingly, what is determined in Iizuka is whether the specific area is being maintained. In that case, so long as the character is within the same area, they maintain the same direction.

On the contrary, so long as the area is maintained the position of coordinates are maintained, and it is done so regardless of whether the user makes changes in the moving direction. Any changes made by the user in the moving direction are totally disregarded so long as the area is the same. This is absolutely recited in column 10, lines 29-36. It specifically was quoted by the Examiner but the Examiner apparently did not focus on this particular section. This paragraph in Iizuka clearly states:

“As described above, the present embodiment allows the direction in which the player character is to move to be fixed even if the input direction with respect to the direction of line of sight changes within the specific area when the moving direction of the player character is decided by the input direction with respect to the direction of line of sight.” (emphasis added)

Accordingly, in Iizuka, the determination of whether to maintain the previous direction of motion of the character as determined by previous viewing, is not determined whether the user changes the direction or not. On the other hand, the user's determination is totally disregarded. The only criteria is whether the character is within a specific area. If a character is within the specific area, then the previous motion is maintained. If he is outside the specific area, then the motion is changed. This is directly the opposite of what applicant is claiming. In applicant's case, it is the user's instruction that determines whether the previous direction from the first viewing is maintained or whether a new direction from the second viewing is to be utilized. Although applicant believes that his previous claims were adequately clear in distinguishing over the combination of references cited by the Examiner, applicant has further modified all of the independent claims to clearly recite that the only time the previous calculated direction of motion is maintained is only "so long as" the operation instruction which is provided by the user is "maintained" even after the viewing has been switched from one viewing perspective to another viewing perspective. The claims have also been further clarified to point out that "only thereafter" when the operation instruction by the user is changed is then the new viewing position used to calculate the motion of direction of the character.

Accordingly, it is believed that the present claims, especially as amended, are clearly distinct from the combination of references cited by the Examiner and such allowance is respectfully requested.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

/Samson Helfgott/
Samson Helfgott
Reg. No. 23,072

CUSTOMER NUMBER 026304
Telephone: (212) 940-6311
Fax: (212) 940-8986
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